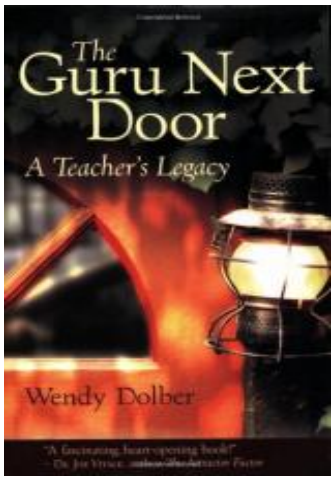
The Guru Next Door: A Teacher

by Wendy Dolber



About the Book

In a suburban community, a young child struggles with a dysfunctional family and a brilliant therapist creates a profound method to help others to be happy. They happen to live next door to each other.

Annie?s mother hides in her room or disappears for days at a time. Annie?s grandmother thinks Annie should never have been born. Annie?s father has abandoned them. Everyone in Annie?s life is unhappy, and she is learning to follow in their footsteps. But Annie notices there is something different about her neighbor. He seems full of joy, warmth, and love. Even though suffering from a serious illness, he spends his days helping others to be happy. People come from all over just to talk with him. Annie wonders what his secret is.

The Guru Next Door: A Teacher?s Legacy brings the spirit of personal development expert Bruce Di Marsico?s revolutionary concept --- the Option Method --- to the masses. This remarkable book shares both the author?s experience with the essence of the man and the thinking behind his reflective teachings.

Many of Di Marsico?s own unique writings and teachings are interwoven throughout this fictional tale. The result is an entertaining and spellbinding illustration of how loving and nonjudgmental questions can reveal secrets within all of us that lead to profound happiness.

Discussion Guide

1. How does the unhappiness of the people in Annie?s life affect how she sees the world and herself? What are they teaching her about herself and her role in their own unhappiness? Can Annie avoid following in their footsteps?

2. Why was Annie?s relationship with Bruce so transformative for her? What is Bruce teaching her that is so essential to her ability to be happy? Did you ever know a person in your life who helped you see the world in a completely different

way? How did it change your life?

3. How did Bruce?s teachings affect you? What did you like about them and what troubled you? Did it affect the way you think about happiness and unhappiness?

4. A key theme is the book is the ability to be happy regardless of our history and circumstances. We see Annie making choices to think differently from her family members. What are some of these choices? Did they inspire you? Was there a cost to Annie in thinking differently than her family?

5. Annie loves her mother tremendously in spite of all her frailities. We see Annie showing true compassion even when her mother abandons her. How does Annie explain her love for her mother? How did you feel about it?

6. When Annie tries to break away from her mother, she keeps getting drawn back in. With the help of Bruce?s teachings, Annie finds the understanding she needs to go her own way. What did she understand about her mother and herself that gave her this freedom?

7. In learning about the Option Method, did you see possibilities for how you could be happier in your own life?

8. In the book, God and happiness are closely related. What?s the connection that Bruce makes between God and happiness? Did you like this way of thinking?

9. Death, and other kinds of loss, are prominent themes throughout the book. What does the story tell us about death and loss and its impact on our lives? How did the different characters in the book deal with these issues? What were the key differences? Do you think it is significant that the author chose to start and end the book with Bruce?s death?

10. Why do you think the author chose a child to tell Bruce?s story and illustrate his teachings? Did Annie?s journey make you think about your own childhood and how it could have been different? How so?

Author Bio

Wendy Dolber has been involved in Option Method training and consultation since the early 1970s. She was associated with Bruce Di Marsico for more than 25 years as his student, associate, and close friend. Option Method forms the centerpiece of Wendy?s life both in her work as a leading bond analyst, her private life and her work with Option Method students all over the world. Wendy is working on expanding the work of Bruce Di Marsico through two additional books and a training program. Through the years, she has written about the Option Method, most recently on OptionMethodNetwork.com. She also contributed to **The Option Method: Unlock Your Happiness With Five Simple Questions**, by Bruce Di Marsico, a posthumous publication edited by Deborah Mendel, Bruce?s widow. Wendy has received recognition from The New Jersey State Council on the Arts for fiction writing.

Critical Praise

"**The Guru Next Door: A Teacher?s Legacy** provides a unique perspective on the teachings of Bruce Di Marsico from one of the people who knew him best."

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